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HOW TO IDENTIFY AND CREATE PLANS FOR DIFFERENT PHASES OF THE GAME

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Gives you a better understanding of how to go about your innings. Allows you the ability to create clear and accurate plans.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT PHASES?

There are only 3 Possible phases your team can be in during the game.

Attacking Phase – Green Light

Neutral Phase - Yellow Light

Defensive Phase – Red Light

ATTACKING PHASE

Your team is on top and looking to continue to aggressively drive the game. Some examples of these are;

- Your team is 0/50 off 6 overs in a 50 or 20 over game.
- It's the last 5 overs of a t20 or 50 over game.
- Your team is 2/170 off 30 overs.
- You have the other team 5/40.

Here's the game I get my team mates to play...

Your plans and the way you play your game should resemble to phase of the game that you are in.



BOWLING PLANS IN THE ATTACKING PHASE

Front Line Bowlers

Using your best bowlers is often the time where you can capitalise and set the game up for a win. When bowling if you have a team 5/40 you would maybe ask your front line/best bowlers to continue to bowl for a few more overs to see if you can take a couple more wickets.

Aggressive Fields

Setting fields that ensure when a chance comes, that it's taken! Fielders in catching positions (slips, gully) and encouraging gaps in the field to draw batters into playing a shot that is high risk or that doesn't suit the length you are bowling.

Aggressive Line and Length

Bowling a length and line that draws the batters to make decisions every time you bowl the ball. Bring the fielders you have set aggressively into play! 3rd or 4th stump line bringing the batter forward trying to get the edge. Important to understand what we mean by aggressive. When players get told to bowl aggressive line and lengths they automatically go to trying to bowl middle stump out of the ground or get them out LBW. This can often reverse your phase you are in because you let the batsmen get away runs and the pressure is taken off.

BATTING PLANS IN THE ATTACKING PHASE

Take more risks

Playing more attacking strokes, or hitting balls you may often not hit due to it being a little riskier and a chance of losing your wicket.



Target Your Strengths

Important aspect to remember. By taking more risks we don't mean going out and playing lap sweeps, switch hits, or running down the wicket and whacking it back over the bowler's heads if you have never done these before. Base your attacking and risk taking around your strengths. You do these well, and most of the time will become easier to score at a higher rate if you are comfortable playing these shots.

Target Weaker or Favourable Bowlers

If you find you are more suited to a certain type of bowling at this point of the game, target that. Play spin well? Or maybe it's right arm mediums, make sure you can get singles off the bowler at the other end and target the weaker or more favourable bowler with a little more aggression.

Aggressive Running Between the Wickets

Taking runs to sweepers/outfielders to put pressure on their throw. Run the first run fast to be able to come back for a second, running to bad/slow fielders, or even when the ball goes to the left-hand side of a right-handed fielder.

NEUTRAL PHASE

The game is evenly balanced and no team has clear momentum. Your role in the Neutral Phase is to build pressure and shift momentum your way to get into a better position.

Some examples of these are;

- Your team is 2/60 off 17.
- Your team is 4/150 off 35.
- The other team is one of the above scores.



BOWLING PLANS IN THE NEUTRAL PHASE

Tight/ Consistent Bowlers

Aim is to continue to build pressure and not let them build a solid partnership. You are looking for a breakthrough and this is where you can throw the ball to the bowlers who have great control and are able to bowl the same ball consistently.

Dry Fields

Set a ring field and ensure minimal gaps are there. Restrict boundary balls to ensure you can maintain pressure on the Batters.

Dry Lines e.g 5/6th Stump

Bowling a slightly wider line will ensure you are able to build dots and not put pressure onto yourself as a bowling unit. Not bowling wide enough for them to attack bad balls, but not straight enough to get them to score if you bowl too straight.

Big Push with Intensity in the field

Voice and intensity in the field. This phase is often the longest you are in and the team that caves first or loses their consistency will not come out on top. Nominating a group of players to lift intensity in the field (chat, fielding standards etc.) can be crucial to coming out on top.

BATTING PLANS IN THE NEUTRAL PHASE

Low/Medium Risk Shots

Making good decisions, relatively low risk shots. Punish the bad ball, keep the good ones out.

Building partnership is Crucial

Building a partnership means confidence to the batters, more runs, and gives you the ability to set a platform to attack with wickets in hand.

Rotate the strike

Ensure you are still scoring runs during this phase. You don't want to put the walls up and not score any runs. This will bring unwanted pressure.

Keep Score Ticking Over

The last thing you want to do is bat yourself into a hole where you must start taking risks. Take easy singles/ hit to the sweepers, and look to have positive intent to get the scoreboard ticking over.

DEFENSIVE PHASE

Your team is under the pump. Your role in the defensive phase is simply to stop the flow or runs or wickets.

Keep alive!

Some Examples of these are;

- You are 5/40 off 15 overs.
- You are 8/100 off 30.
- They are 0/60 off 6.
- They are 2/200 off 35.
- You are bowling in the last 5 overs of a t20 or 50 over game.



BOWLING PLANS IN THE DEFENSIVE PHASE

Defensive Fields (4/5 out)

Remember, this is when they are going all out. Your job is to stem the flow of runs, bowl to a field that helps you reduce the number of boundaries they can score. Set fielders on the fence, but make sure they match the type of balls you want to bowl. If bowling full, more fielders out on the boundary straight, if bowling short, more fielders out on the boundary square (square leg, fine leg, point, third man).

Must have a clear plan

You need to know where you want to bowl the ball. Get the batter hitting the ball to your fielders.

Limit Batter's access to strengths

Identify as early as possible what the batter's strengths are when they are attacking the try not to bowl to them. Batter hits well straight and full, maybe looking at bowling a touch shorter and getting them to hit the ball squarer or vice versa.

Might look to front line bowlers

Have your better bowlers at the death. Those that can execute their plans and can do this consistently. This will help with trying to restrict boundary balls and bowl more dot balls (which are golden in this phase).



BATTING PLANS IN DEFENSIVE PHASE

Little to no risk plans

Defensive plans mean minimal risk, it's all about survival.

Partnership Crucial

You must work together and communicate in this situation. Building a partnership will help transition into the Neutral phase of the game and get you on track to being able to post a reasonable total to defend.

Keep positive mindset and look to score in your zones

Back your strengths and take low risks. If the bowler over pitches, make them pay. Nothing helps with confidence and momentum like putting away the bad ball. Playing low risk, high reward shots that you know are your strengths makes it easier for you to tick the scoreboard over with minimal risk.

Team Support Crucial

Be seen and heard. Running drinks out, cheering the batters at the crease and supporting them with whatever they need to make them feel comfortable. This will help the batting pair immensely. Sometimes it feels like it's 11 vs 2 out there, your support from the sideline can help reduce that feeling and makes them confident in their skills to achieve your teams desired result.

